

Message Text

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ACTION NASA-04

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ADP-00 SCI-06 ACDA-19 MC-02 EB-11

COME-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-15 RSR-01 /148 W

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R 271200Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

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E.O. 11652: DECON 31DEC76

TAGS: TSPA, NASA, MA, US

SUBJ: NASA STATION IN MADAGASCAR

REFS: A) STATE 151355(NOTAL; B) TANANARIVE 1151(NOTAL)

BEGIN SUMMARY: TO ACHIEVE MALAGASIZATION OF NASA STATION IN MADAGASCAR, START MADE IN FOCUSING GOMR ATTENTION ON NEED SELECT MALAGASY "COOPERATING AGENCY" FOR OPERATION OF STATION. INABILITY OF NASA MAKE FIRM COMMITMENT OF NEED FOR STATION BEYOND MINIMUM OF 3-5 YEARS GIVES RISE, HOWEVER, TO SOME THOUGHT IN GOMR OF STATION RENT AS POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE TO MALAGASIZATION. WITH FONMIN RATSI-RAKA FIRMLY DESIRING RETENTION OF STATION IN MADAGASCAR, WE BELIEVE THAT EVIDENT COOPERATIVE SPIRIT ON BOTH SIDES WILL ENABLE ANY DIFFCULTIES OVER MODALITIES OF EXTENSION OF NASA STATION AGREEMENT BE WORKED OUT. END SUMMARY

1. NASA ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR TRUSZYNSKI AND I CALLED ON
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MALAGASY FONMIN RATSI-RAKA 25AUG. WE STRESSED NEED FOR EARLY

FOCUS BY GOMR ON SELECTION OF "COOPERATING AGENCY" WITH WHICH NASA COULD CONTRACT IN EFFORT ACHIEVE AGREED GOAL OF MALAGASIZATION WITHIN THREE YEARS. WE NOTED THREE POSSIBILITIES HAVE OCCURRED TO US: DIRECTORATE OF POST AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS, STIMAD (OPERATOR OF EARTH SATELLITE STATION), OR UNIVERSITY OF MADAGASCAR. WE INDICATED WE THOUGHT FIRST ON PERHPAS COMBINATION OF FIRST TWO MIGHT BE PREFERABLE FROM STANDPOINTS OF RELATED TECHNICAL CAPABILITY AND ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCY. RATSIRAKA PUT FORTH ARMY AS FOURTH POSSIBILITY. FYI: TRUSZYNSKI LATER TOLD EMBASSY THERE IS PRECEDENT IN NASA ARRANGEMENT WITH SPAIN FOR MILITARY OFFICER TO HEAD COOPERATING AGENCY. END FYI.

2. WE FURTHER TOLD RATSIRAKA THAT MALAGASY COOPERATING AGENCY NEEDED NOT JUST AT END OF THREE-YEAR TARGET PERIOD FOR MALAGASIZATION, BUT SHOULD BE DESIGNATED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THAT NASA AND IT COULD WORK OUT TOGETHER TIME-PHASED PROGRAM FOR TRAINING OF MALAGASY AND REPLACING OF EXISTING AMERICAN CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL AT NASA STATION. COMMENT: THIS WAS FIRST TIME RATSIRAKA HAD SPECIFICALLY THOUGHT ABOUT MECHANISM REQUIRED FOR CARRYING THROUGH MALAGASIZATION. HE WAS OBVIOUSLY PLEASED WE RAISED SUBJECT AND INTERPRETED IT AS EVIDENCE OF AMERICAN GOOD FAITH IN PURSUIT OF MALAGASIZATION. END COMMENT.

3. RATSIRAKA THEN ASKED HOW LONG NASA WOULD NEED MADAGASCAR STATION. TRUSZYNSKI REPLIED WITH SAME FORMULA USED REF A OF "AT LEAST 3-5 YEARS". NOT SURPRISINGLY, THIS GAVE RATSIRAKA TROUBLE. HE INQUIRED WHY THEN PROCEED WITH MALAGASIZATION. I ADDED, WHILE NASA STATEMENT ABOUT FUTURE MUST NECESSARILY BE CAUTIOUS, IT WOULD SEEM WORTH RISK OF PURSUING MALAGASIZATION IN VIEW OF POSSIBILITIES OF CONTINUED OPERATION OF STATION. COMMENT: FUTURE ABSORPTION OF MALAGASY ECONOMY OF HIGHLY TRAINED TECHNICIANS, IF AND WHEN NASA STATION CLOSES, LIKELY REPRESENT VERY REAL PROBLEM. END COMMENT.

4. RATSIRAKA ALSO RAISED QUESTION OF RENT FOR NASA STATION, STATING IT ENVISAGED UNDER TERMS OF EXISTING AGREEMENT. HE SUGGESTED THIS MIGHT OFFER ALTERNATIVE TO MALAGASIZATION IN VIEW OF PROBLEM RAISED PARA 3 ABOVE. SINCE NEITHER RATSIRAKA NOR WE HAD TEXT EXISTING AGREEMENT AT HAND, WE AGREED LEAVE THIS QUESTION FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION.

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INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ADP-00 SCI-06 ACDA-19 MC-02 EB-11

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5. COMMENTS:

A) SUBSEQUENT RESTUDY OF AGREEMENT TEXT INDICATES THAT RATSIRAKA HAS IN MIND FIRST SENTENCE NUMBERED PARAGRAPH (2) A. OF OCTOBER 7, 1963 AGREEMENT STATING THAT "GOVERNEMENT OF MALAGASY REPUBLIC SHALL USE ITS BEST EFFORTS TO INSURE THAT LAND AREAS AND RIGHTS-OF WAY REQUIRED FOR STATION SHALL BE LEASED TO GOVERNMENT OF UNITED STATES..".

FRENCH TEXT USES PHRASE, "DONNEES EN LOCATION" FOR "LEASED". WE INTEND TELL RATSIRAKA THAT THIS SENTENCE SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH NUMBERED PARAGRAPH (2) B. STATING THAT "RENTAL COSTS FOR RIGHTS-OF-WAY REQUIRED FOR STATION SHALL BE BORNE BY GOVERNMENT OF UNITED STATES". ABSENCE OF REFERENCE TO RENTAL COSTS OF "LAND AREAS" MADE AVAILABLE TO NASA INDICATES THAT RENT FOR THAT PURPOSE NOT ENVISAGED BY AGREEMENT, AND HAS IN FACT NEVER BEEN PAID. MOREOVER, NO RENT HAS BEEN PAID FOR "RIGHTS-OF-WAY" BECAUSE ACCESS ROUTE TO STATION IS PUBLIC ROAD.

B) AS RATSIRAKA COMMENTED THAT, IN NEGOTIATION OF EXTENSION OF NASA STATION AGREEMENT, HE HAS TO BE IN POSITION OF DEMONSTRATING TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MALAGASY PUBLIC THAT HE HAS DONE EVERYTHING NECESSARY TO DEFEND MAL-

AGASY INTERESTS, WE PLAN ALSO TELL HIM THAT WE UNDERSTAND THIS PROBLEM AND WHAT WE ARE DOING FOR MADAGASCAR IS DESIGNED PUT HIM INTO POSITION OF DEALING WITH IT.

6. RATSIRAKA ALSO RAISED COMPLAINTS OF CERTAIN MALAGASY EMPLOYEES AT NASA STATION WHICH HAD BEEN BROUGHT TO HIS ATTENTION. I TOLD HIM WE AWARE THESE COMPLAINTS, AND DCM AND NASA STATION DIRECTOR PLANNING MEET WITH MALAGASY DIRECTOR BILATERAL RELATIONS THIS WEEK TO GO THROUGH THEM ONE BY ONE. RATSIRAKA AGREED THIS APPROPRIATE METHOD OF DEALING

WITH THIS MATTER. INTERESTINGLY, HE ALSO REFERRED TO RECENT PRESS ARTICLE ON COMPLAINTS OF NASA STATION EMPLOYEES, AND SAID HE HAD TOLD LATTER THAT HE WOULD NOT BE PRESSURED BY PRESS ON THESE MATTERS AND THAT, IF THEY WANTED MOFA ASSISTANCE THEREON, THEY SHOULD KEEP THESE QUESTIONS OUT OF PRESS.

7. RATSIRAKA ASKED TRUSZHNISKI WHETHER GOMR COULD GET PHOTOGRAPHS THROUGH ERTS PROGRAM AND, IF SO, FREE OF CHARGE. TRUSZYNSKI RESPONDED AFFIRMATIVELY, BUT NOTED NASA PREFERS RECEIVE MALAGASY REQUEST RELATED

TO SPECIFIC PROJECT WHICH NASA WOULD THEN SEEK INCLUDE IN PROGRAM OF ERTS SATELLITE. RATSIRAKA ALSO RAISED POSSIBILITY OF SUDDEN URGENT MALAGASY REQUEST FOR INDIVIDUAL OR ISOLATED PHOTOGRAPHY. TRUSZYNSKI INDICATED THIS COULD IF NECESSARY BE ACCOMMODATED, BUT NASA NORMALLY PREFERS ORDERLY PROGRAMMING APPROACH.

8. OVERALL COMMENT: USEFUL, FRIENDLY SESSION FURTHER SHOWING RATSIRAKA'S DESIRE FOR RETENTION OF NASA STATION. THERE COULD STILL PERHAPS BE DIFFICULTIES OVER MODALITIES IN NEGOTIATIONS, BUT WE BELIEVE THAT, WITH COOPERATIVE SPIRIT EVIDENT ON BOTH SIDES, THEY CAN BE WORKED OUT. END COMMENT.

9. THIS MESSAGE DRAFTED AFTER TRUSZYNSKI'S DEPARTURE AND HE THEREFORE HAS NOT SEEN IT.

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Message Attributes

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